



Woodstock Public Library Administrative & Staff Reports – August 2021

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

August is typically a quiet month, and it was this year as well, but it was complicated by a number of staffing issues and the resurgence of COVID-19. Some traction is beginning to take hold on the various building projects, but several remain bogged down by slow supply lines or unavailable parts. Staff is planning for more programming in the fall, a mix of remote, hybrid and in-person. The library will begin searching for two new part-time employees in September.

Our virtual programs continue to be well-attended, and story times are starting back up for their next five-week session. We will hopefully be holding the story times outside at Emricson Park to provide better social distancing. Nerf battles return for the first time in over a year this month, and our Quilter group and Civil War History group will be having in-person meetings for the first time in 18-months. Some of these activities will occur after our closing time, since the modified hours will remain in place for now, but we have staff who would like to work an occasional night to provide supervision.

The Rotunda Roof project is finally nearing kickoff, as the roofing company has the materials they need to begin. The reupholstering of all of the comfy chairs is about 4-6 weeks from beginning, and the new front door is scheduled to be delivered on September 17, with an anticipated 1-2 day completion time. The painting of the front half of the building should start in the next three weeks.

News regarding COVID-19 in the area continues to be bad, with the entire state, and most of the country, in the CDC's "High Transmission" level. Library protocols have not been changed, with the exception of requiring masks of all patrons in all areas of the library, but if things continue to worsen, we might need to remove some of the chairs we just put back out. The small meeting room will remain closed for now, but the large meeting room will reopen around the Friends of the Library's used book sale Sept. 10-12. The book sale will allow the Friends to sell some, hopefully most, of the large backlog of materials they have collecting during the pandemic.

Staffing continues to be challenging as a number of staff have needed time off for a variety of reasons, some requiring fairly lengthy absences. Hopefully, we are on the mend and staffing should get easier in the near future. Additionally, we hope to begin searching for two new front desk/shelvers in the next few weeks.

CIRCULATION & PROGRAMMING

August 2021

Circulation and patron visits were up in August compared to last year, since we were open only a limited amount during August in 2020. This August our total was 12,252. Pre-COVID-19, our August circulation rate was in the 19,000-21,000 range, so we are still down by 30%. We are still without a patron counter, so while the building feels as busy as pre-COVID-19, I do not have firm data to back that up.

FINANCIALS

Spending out of the current fiscal budget is under way. This year's spending is trending in a far more normal way than last fiscal year, though the capital improvements that were supposed to be spread out across the entire year may wind up all happening at the same time due to supply line issues.

MEETING/ORGANIZATION SUMMARIES

City Meetings/City News

The City Council met in-person in August with a fair amount of business, most of it routine. The council briefly pushed back its move toward adding two executive director positions to the city organizational structure, but the proposal is still on-track for approval at their September 7 meeting. Video gaming was a discussion of some length and interest for the council as well.

Community Outreach

During the month the library staff engaged in several outreach and community support activities, including continuing our partnership with MBI and their MBI Cares initiative. Additionally, the library's involvement in the Old Courthouse Arts Center is ramping up as the city moves through the process of renovating the building. Planning for Witches and Wizards of Woodstock 2021 is progressing well, and barring complications from COVID-19, should be a fun event again this year.

YOUTH SERVICES

- Pamela and Sarah Jane took advantage of the quiet month to finalize plans for story times. The youth services team decided it would be better to host these programs outside, so Kate is working with the Recreation department to reserve the main pavilion at Emricson Park for story times.
- Volunteers are almost finished prepping the craft parts for WWoW. We'll have 4 different crafts with enough materials for kids to make 400 of each craft. These are the same crafts we used last year, since not many people took advantage of the craft kits for the virtual WWoW.
- Kate released the first Monarch butterflies on August 10th, and the last Monarch butterflies on August 31st. Families liked seeing the caterpillars develop from eggs to butterflies, so we'll be doing this project again next year.

- Pamela is carefully monitoring data and trends to improve storytimes. According to the [IL State Board of Education](#), only 36% of kids in the state of IL attend preschool, and only 1 out of every three kids is ready for kindergarten. Due to this data, Pamela is curating all of her storytimes to help kids become more kindergarten-ready. This fall, all sessions will focus on social-emotional learning. Since the storytimes will be held at the park, Pamela hopes to reach more people in the community and connect them with library services.
- Verda Dierzen is reusing and promoting Pamela's library tour video from last year. Pamela has also created new dinosaur-themed crafts for Verda Dierzen students that come into the library after viewing the tour online. After Pamela spoke to the school contact last week, she received a very nice thank you email expressing what a value the library is to the community.

ADULT PROGRAMMING

August Adult Program Happenings:

- August was busy for library staff as we begin preparing to host in-person programs for the first time since March of 2020. Katie led small group training sessions to teach or refresh staff on how to register patrons for library programs. All staff are now ready for the first day of registration on Wednesday, September 8th.
- Katie, Pamela, and Sarah Jane hosted Friends Trivia. Home State Bank donated some swag for one of the prizes. The prize paid tribute to the episode where Chandler is stuck in a Bank/ATM vestibule with model Jill Goodacre.

CALENDAR (<https://il.evanced.info/woodstock/lib/eventcalendar.asp>)

Upcoming Events & Dates of Import:

- Mondays, 5:30 – 6:30 pm: Cuentos en Español
- Tuesdays, 10:00 – 10:45 am: Books and Babies Storytime
- Wednesdays, 10 – 10:45 am: Toddler Storytime
- Thursdays, 5:30 – 6:30 pm: PJ Storytime
- Fridays, 10:00 – 10:45 am: Preschool Storytime
- Wednesday, Sept. 8 – Tuesday, Sept. 14: September 11, 2001 Exhibit
- Friday, Sept. 10, 10am – 5 pm: Friends of the Library Fall Plant Sale
- Friday, Sept. 10 – Sunday, Sept. 12: Friends of the Library Book Sale
- Friday, Sept. 10, 6:30 – 8:00 pm: Virtual Trivia: Studio Ghibli
- Tuesday, Sept. 14, 6:30 – 8:00 pm: Teen Study Night
- Tuesday, Sept. 21, 6:30 – 8:00 pm: Cupcake Wars
- Monday, Sept. 27, 7:00 – 8:00 pm: Virtual Field Trip: National Baseball Hall of Fame